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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 JAKARTA 000766

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DEPT FOR EAP/IET, OES/IET, AND OES/ETC

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TAGS: [SENV](#) [TPHY](#) [TBIO](#) [TRGY](#) [ENRG](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: INDONESIA ESTH HIGHLIGHTS - FEBRUARY 2007

1. Summary: On February 1, "Eyes on the Forest", a coalition of three non-governmental organizations (NGOs), protested a Government of Indonesia (GOI) plan to auction 130,000 hectares of former concession areas in Riau and Jambi for plantation use. On February 13-16, the Indonesian Ministries of Forestry and Foreign Affairs hosted a United Nations Forum on Forest (UNFF) meeting in Bali in preparation for an April 2007 UNFF meeting in New York. On February 20, Indonesia's Minister of Forestry welcomed the arrival of Andalas, a five-year old male Sumatran rhinoceros (*dicerorhinus sumatrensis*) born in a Cincinnati zoo, as part of a program that rebuilds the Sumatran rhino population. On February 21, the World Bank office in Jakarta released a new report entitled "Sustaining Economic Growth, Rural Livelihoods and Environmental Benefits: Strategic Options for Forest Assistance in Indonesia". On February 21, the Ministry of Forestry (MOF) announced the allocation of 5.4 million hectares of unproductive plantation forest to its community forest plantation (HTR) initiative, which seeks to encourage small-scale sustainable forest development. As Indonesia begins planning for a December 2007 Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Bali, the GOI plans to stop the importation of products containing Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) by the end of 2007 due to CFCs' negative impact on the environment. As part of GOI efforts to combat polio, the Ministry of Health (MOH) conducted vaccinations for polio and measles, and distributed doses of vitamin A on Java Island on February 20. End Summary

Forest Conversion Threatens Elephant Habitat

2. On February 1, "Eyes on the Forest" (EoF), a coalition of three NGOs that includes World Wildlife Fund, Jikalahari, and Friends of the Earth Indonesia (WALHI Riau), protested a GOI plan to auction 130,000 hectares of former concession areas in Riau and Jambi for plantation use. The NGOs believe the conversion will threaten the habitats of 60-70 Sumatran elephants and 100 tigers living in the area. EoF coordinator Nursamsu asserted that the conversion would increase the potential for conflict between animals and humans in the area and would threaten the forest's ecosystem by reducing heterogeneity in the forest. Nursamsu added the auction stands in contradiction to the government policy of reforesting two million hectares of critical forest land. In addition, the head of the 413,000 hectare Bukit Tigapuluh National Park, Haryono, announced that he expects the GOI to exclude the 86,000 hectares of forest previously set aside for park expansion from the auction. Haryono added that plantation development in the area would threaten the livelihood and lives of indigenous people residing within the borders of the National Park.

Indonesia hosts UN Forum on Forest

13. On February 13-16, the Indonesian Ministries of Forestry and Foreign Affairs hosted a United Nations Forum on Forest (UNFF) meeting in Bali in preparation for the April 2007 UNFF in New York. Approximately 170 participants from around the world attended the Forum. The participants discussed the concepts that underpin the UNFF's Multi Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) and presented regional and sub-regional perspectives on forest issues.

Sumatra-American Rhino Back Home

14. On February 20, Indonesia's Minister of Forestry received Andalas, a five-year old male Sumatran rhinoceros (*dicerorhinus sumatrensis*) born in the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, at Jakarta's Soekarno-Hatta airport. The return of Andalas is part of the GOI's Indonesian Rhino Conservation Strategy, under which the GOI plans to establish a Sumatran rhino breeding program in Way Kambas, Lampung. Andalas will breed with two females, Rosa and Ratu, already living at the sanctuary. A team of U.S. rhino experts working at the facility has been using ultrasound technology to establish the birth cycles of Rosa and Ratu in an effort to speed up the breeding process. Experts believe there are approximately 300 Sumatran rhinos alive in several isolated areas of Sumatra and Malaysia and perhaps 60 Javan rhinos alive in Ujung Kulon national park on the western tip of Java Island. The experts note that the population of Sumatran and Javanese rhinos will be out of immediate danger only when the rhino population reaches 2,500, a goal they say may take 50-60 years.

World Bank Launches Forestry Report

15. On February 21, the World Bank Office in Jakarta released a new

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report entitled "Sustaining Economic Growth, Rural Livelihoods and Environmental Benefits: Strategic Options for Forest Assistance in Indonesia". Six co-sponsoring institutions, including the World Bank, Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), the European Union, the Asian Development Bank, World Agro-Forestry Centre and the International Finance Corporation, produced the report for the international donor community, the GOI and other stakeholders.

16. The report focuses on the impact of deforestation on both the land and people, stressing methods to balance and improve community livelihoods while maintaining environmental services and biodiversity goals. The report also cites four main priority areas for forest assistance from donor agencies: 1) improving governance to close the gap between rules and results; 2) improving rural livelihoods to narrow the gap between rich forests and poor people; 3) increasing sustainable economic development to bridge the gap between benefits and beneficiaries; and 4) protecting environmental services and biodiversity to bridge the gap between current use and future stewardship.

Community Forest Plantation Initiative

17. On February 21, the MOF announced the allocation of 5.4 million hectares of unproductive plantation forest to its community forest plantation initiative, which seeks to encourage small-scale sustainable forest development. During the first phase, the project will operate in 102 regencies across eight provinces in Sumatra and Kalimantan and will include participation from a projected 360,000 households. The MOF selected Sumatra and Kalimantan due to the large concentration of timber industries on those islands. Under the current plan, the MOF plans to allocate 15 hectares to each eligible individual or cooperative. The MOF also plans to provide streamlined permit procedures and requirements, grant loans at commercial interest rates, offer institutional support from local governments, and is discussing ways to raise prices for wood products produced in community forests.

¶18. As Indonesia begins planning for a December 2007 Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Bali, the GOI will stop the importation of products containing CFCs by the end of 2007 due to the negative impact CFCs have on the environment. On June 22, 2006, the Minister of Trade issued a regulation entitled "Import Provision of Ozone Layer Destruction Substances" (Regulation of Minister of Trade No. 24/M-DAG/PER/6/2006) stating that the importation of CFC-11 for the foam and footwear industries, CFC-12 for the air conditioner and aerosol industries, CFC-113 for the metal dissolving and cleaning, and CFC-114 and CFC-115 for the use in air conditioning liquids will be phased out by the end of 2007.

¶19. Environmental Investigation Agency Senior Environmentalist Ezra Clark noted that Indonesia is currently the largest market for environmentally detrimental Freon in Asia, and that Freon exports from China enter Indonesia via Singapore. Data released in 2005 in the Global Trade Information Services' World Trade Atlas revealed that China exported 1,178 metric tons of Freon to Indonesia in 2002, but Indonesian Customs recorded only 150 metric tons. By 2004, Freon exports from China to Indonesia had grown to 1,500 metric tons. The GOI ratified the Vienna Convention for the protection of the Ozone Layer in 1992 and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer in 1998.

Indonesia Combats Polio -----

¶10. As a part of GOI efforts to make Indonesia polio-free, the MOH conducted vaccinations for polio and measles, and distributed doses of vitamin A on Java Island on February 20. The MOH will hold similar vaccination drives in Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Bali and West Nusa Tenggara in August. The MOH allocated 17.2 billion rupiah (USD 1.9 million) from the 2007 State Budget to implement these programs. Indonesia identified a new case of polio on March 13 2005, following ten years of being polio-free. The number of cases increased through February 2006, with cases reported in 48 regencies across 10 provinces. The disease had infected over 300 children by early 2006. Due in large part to immunization drives and other disease control efforts by the GOI, there have been no new polio cases report for more than a year.

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